



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose Peralta

State Senator Peralta's Fake ID Bill Passed By Senate

JOSE PERALTA June 5, 2012

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State Senator Jose Peralta's bill to crack down on mills churning out fake IDs and other forged official documents was passed Thursday by the State Senate.

The bill creates the crime of sale of a forged instrument and upgrades the manufacture of official government documents, such as passports and driver's licenses, from a Class D to a Class C felony, roughly doubling jail sentences. It would also make forging a government document a more serious offense than other forgeries—say of a metro card, for example.

"A terrorist plot to do us harm might be hatched in another country thousands of miles from here, but some of the tools to make it happen are being produced right in our own backyard," said Senator Peralta, whose district includes the stretch of Roosevelt Avenue that investigators have called the East Coast "epicenter" of fake ID production and sale. Forged documents available on Roosevelt Avenue include passports, driver's licenses and social security cards

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"The quality of the forged documents and the fact that they're so easy to obtain undermines the hard work of homeland security and law enforcement to keep us safe," added Senator

Peralta. “With this ready availability of high-quality forged official documents, it should come as no surprise that we’re seeing fake identifications at the heart of a number of criminal enterprises, scandals and tragedies, from identity theft, to college entrance exam cheating, to deaths on our roadways.”

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Under current law, there is no specific penalty for the sale of forged instruments, whether they be bogus pharmaceutical prescriptions or phony social security cards. Penalties for making and selling phony official documents are the same as those for merely possessing a fake document. An underage drinker caught with a fake ID, for example, faces potentially the same punishment under the law as someone running a fake ID mill.

“This bill very specifically and directly singles out the real threats to society,” said Senator Peralta. “It does that by defining sale in a way that helps police and prosecutors target every link in the chain of sale, making it more difficult for forged document rings to operate, whether on Roosevelt Avenue or anyplace else in New York State.”